The Story of the Weeping Monk and the Just Caliph

Islamic Stories - Volume 63

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Chapter 1: A Visit to the Caliph

A Solemn Encounter: The Arrival of a Monk

Hazrat Maymūn ibn Mihrān recounted a significant event that occurred during the caliphate of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. On one occasion, a Christian monk came to meet the Caliph. Upon his arrival, ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz addressed him directly, curious about the monk's manner and reputation for emotional intensity.

The Caliph’s Inquiry:

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz:

"I have been informed that you weep constantly. Why is that?"

The Monk’s Response: A Reflection on the World

The monk responded with solemnity, offering a grave reflection on the moral decline of mankind. His words revealed deep sorrow at the transformation he had witnessed in people’s priorities over time.

A Monk’s Lament:

Monk:

"I observed that people once regarded religion as the most important aspect of life. But now, it seems that nothing is deemed more important than the world. So I have come to realise that, in our times, death is better for both the righteous and the wicked."

The Afterword: A Caliph’s Recognition

When the monk departed, ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz turned to his companion, Abū Ayyūb. Deeply moved, the Caliph acknowledged the truth and sincerity in the monk’s words.

A Caliph’s Reflection:

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz:

"O Abū Ayyūb, this monk speaks words that truly come from the heart."